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Inconsideration is the mother of every fault.
 Use is the mother of every mastery.
 Fortitude is the mother of every victory.
 Conscience is the mother of all morality.
 Love is the mother of all piety.

THE OPTIMATES OF CATWG*.

The best of powers is intellect :
 The best of intellects is the understanding :
 The best of the understanding is wit :
 The best of wit is selection :
 The best of selection is wealth :
 The best of wealth is wisdom :
 The best of wisdom is goodness :
 The best of goodness is love :
 The best of love is (the love of) peace :
 The best of peace is the peace of God.

EXCERPTA.

THE following letter relates to a subject, which has before undergone a partial discussion in this work,—the elementary structure of the Welsh tongue†. However, to those who take any interest in philological inquiries, these additional observations, and especially as proceeding from a person so well qualified to investigate the point, cannot but prove acceptable. If, as the writer seems to have anticipated, some may deem his remarks rather visionary, it can only be because they have not sufficiently considered those minute principles, which formed the original basis of all human speech. And, if we find these simple elements more discernible in the Welsh than in most other languages, the circumstance must necessarily be admitted as an incontestible proof of its primitive character, and, consequently, of its antiquity. For this reason, the succeeding letter of MERION has been selected as particularly worthy of republication in these pages.

* * *

* Arch. of Wales, vol. iii. p. 68.

† See vol. i. pp. 81 & 161.—ED.

STRUCTURE OF THE WELSH LANGUAGE,

“ To the *Editor of the Monthly Magazine**.

“ SIR,—The communications, which have already appeared in the *Monthly Magazine* with respect to language, promise much valuable information : and they indicate, that men of science begin to cultivate this branch of learning with that attention, which it deserves. Circumstances having directed my pursuits to the investigation of the Welsh tongue, it has been continued closely for many years, chiefly from the pleasure it afforded ; and it bids fair ultimately to unfold things, which appear to me extraordinary and surprising, compared with what is known to the world on the subject in general. Permit me, therefore, Sir, to bring to notice a few remarkable discoveries from the language just mentioned.

“ In the first place, there are in it thirty-six letters, being, I believe, the exact amount of the powers of articulation. The vowel sounds, unconnected with consonants, imply motion or action in various times. All the possible changes of simple sounds, or primary combinations of vowels and consonants, such as *ab, ci, da, eb*, and the like, are about three hundred. These sounds, having respectively a fixed abstract meaning, constitute the basis, from which every longer word is regularly formed in all its parts. Some of the simple sounds stand always for principals, or nouns, and others remain as qualities ; and the latter, generally dropping their vowels, are prefixed to the others in forming the first sort of compounds, which are monosyllables, like *bod, cad, mam*, and *pen*. All words of this kind, that have a common basis, do necessarily preserve the fundamental idea originally annexed to such basis, however qualified by different prefixes, for the sake of discrimination and multiplying of terms. This may be illustrated by putting the qualifying prefixes *cy, fy, gy, hy, ly, ny, py, ry, sy*, to the noun *en*, which form the following class of words :—

- Cen*—what is foremost or uppermost : a point, a head.
- Fen*—what has aptness to proceed, or to flow : a breath.
- Gen*—intellect or soul : organ of utterance ; a mouth.
- Hen*—what is fully advanced or matured : old.
- Len*—what is over or covering : a veil.
- Nen*—what spreads over : a vault or canopy ; the sky.
- Pen*—what is superior : a head, a top ; chief.

* Vol. ii. p. 542.

Ren—the supreme, the most high: God.

Sen—what is put forward or conspicuous: a stigma.

“All words of one syllable, like those last mentioned, become verbs, when they are farther compounded by affixing a vowel. The terminations of verbs, which are generally considered as mere arbitrary signs of the different inflexions, are real words with appropriate meanings descriptive of such modes or times, for which they stand, and are so used separately.

“In the next place, those elementary sounds, with such meanings as are annexed to them in Welsh, explain abstractedly most words in different languages, agreeable to the appropriate significations given to them. That the hint may receive some illustration, two or three examples shall be given; and first, when the fundamental idea is preserved through a whole class of words:

SY (existing as a quality or agent) that sends, forces, raises, or shoots out from a point in any direction.

BAL (*by* the agent and *al* the element) what is sent, impelled, raised, or projected, from a point in any direction.

“Now, let the reader turn in his mind all the words he can collect in different languages, beginning with *Sy* and with *Bal*, he will then, perhaps, fancy, that he perceives these two leading ideas preserved throughout*. For the sake of brevity, one instance shall suffice with respect to particular words. The appropriate import of the English word *Run* is well known: the abstract meaning of the same sound in Welsh, by considering its component parts, would be *excess of energy* or *activity*; but it is appropriated in Welsh to express *agitation* or *shivering*, and the word *Rhéd*, which also implies *excess of motion*, is used synonymously with *Run* in English. The prefix used to both words is *Ry* or *Re*, *over*, *much*, *to excess*; and, perhaps, this fixes the meaning of the common prefix *Re*, implying *over* or *past* a given point, as in *Reverse* and the like.

“Lest this article should run too long, I must conclude with barely enumerating a few particulars more, which may be enlarged upon at a future opportunity.

“All the simple sounds are reserved to convey general or abstract ideas, and not particular things. The primary compounds

* Several instances of words in various languages, in which *bal* predominates, may be found in the first volume of the *Cambrian Register*, p. 7. *et seq.*
—ED.

express the most general and particular things. The combination of several sounds, or long words, express the more complex ideas.

“Such a regular system of speech seems to prove, that man originally made use of only simple sounds to convey ideas, or that the mind, without communication, received it in its more complex form, or—that language was imparted to the first man perfectly constructed.

“A very great number of compound words, resolvable to their primitives in Welsh, run through many languages.

“There are, in the Welsh, words perfectly similar in sound to the mythologic names of the antient world, answering to most of the explanations given by Gebelin and Bryant. It would be difficult to adduce a single article or form of construction in the Hebrew grammar, which is not to be found in Welsh; and there are many whole sentences in both languages precisely the same, in the very words. The Irish and Welsh are, fundamentally, the same, but differing much in dialect and pronunciation. The Slavonic, Breton, and Welsh, are one language, with but little variation of dialect, which I conceive to be an important discovery. The Slavons and Welsh having been a separate people from a very remote period militates greatly against the common notion of the instability of language.

“There is not the least difference between the language of the laws of Hywel in the tenth or of Geoffrey of Monmouth’s History in the twelfth century and that now spoken in Wales.

“Some may be apt to condemn the above as rather visionary; but, if any should be inclined to point out what seems improbable, perhaps I may be able to bring forward many extraordinary proofs in support of what is advanced.

“Your’s, &c.

MEIRION.”

ANCIENT MANUSCRIPTS.

REV. EDWARD LLWYD’S COLLECTION.

It is well known to the readers of Welsh literature that the Rev. Edward Llwyd, the celebrated author of *Archæologia Britannica*, had formed a valuable and extensive collection of Welsh MSS. These consisted as well of ancient MSS. as of others of his own writing, which had a more immediate reference to the great plan, he had in contemplation, of publishing a second vo-